

One for the Murphys

Lynda Mullaly Hunt

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In *One for the Murphys*, Hunt explores the foster care system and takes a deep dive into an 80-day life of a young, preteen girl, Carley Connors. Carley's original parents were monsters; they were both alcoholics and simply did not know how to parent properly. Once, Dennis viciously attacked Carley and her mother, sending both of them to the hospital. It was decided that Carley needed to be sent to a foster home; she was better off there than with Dennis and her mother, again both alcoholics. At first in her new home, Carley is very disoriented because of how tidy and clean her adopted family had kept their house; Carley had seen nothing like that before. She grows apart from her new loving mother because she originally had confusing feelings about how her parents should act; but over time, their whole family grows closer apart. However, this book has an extremely sad ending, as her original drunken mother got out of her coma, forcing her daughter to reunite with her. Although Carley enjoyed her time with her adopted family, she is in hopes that she is able to create that loving environment for herself.

Personally, I enjoyed reading this book a lot, and it gripped me in a compelling way. Foster care is always a tough and difficult phase to go through, and the feeling of not having anyone to care for you is demoralizing. Since this book was in the first person, it allowed readers to really understand what goes on in a child's mind in those situations, and it is just traumatizing. The book was not fast-paced nor slow-paced; Hunt included lots of details and examples of what Carley goes through on a daily basis, but Hunt made sure to keep the readers eager and on their toes to see how Carley's life plays out. There was not much to dislike in this book besides the parts where Carley is in foster care and the character depiction and behavioral changes Carley's parents go through all the time.

For this book, I suggest an age group from 10-25. This is mainly because young kids in foster care, or previously in foster care, can easily relate to Carley. Also, young adults that had experienced the troubles of adoption and foster care before could reflect back on their experiences as an orphan. I would not suggest adults read this book because it is hard for them to relate to children like Carley. Whether they were in foster care as a child or not: there would be no point looking back simply because they cannot relate. Finally, it is the reader's preference whether they would want to get this book from the library or as a gift; there are some sad parts, but for the most part, this book is inspiring and teaches you a lot about the troubles kids go through on a daily basis.

Recommended Titles

Because of Mr Terrupt – Rob Buyea

Out of My Mind – Sharon Draper

Rules – Cynthia Lord

11 Birthdays – Wendy Mass

